

VZCZCXR08124
PP RUEHDU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR
DE RUEHKI #0476 0811519

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 221519Z MAR 06

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3494
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000476

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR OES/PCI-STEWARD AND OES/IHA-SINGER
DEPT PASS USAID FOR AID/W/AFR MHARVEY AND KODONNELL
HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER/BHAT
HHS PASS TO CDC FOR BLOUNT/JANI/LEDUC/NCOX/ARTHUR
GENEVA FOR WHO
ROME FOR FAO
USDA/APHIS/US/NCIE FOR BURLESON
USDA/FSIS FOR RHARRIES
USDA/FAS/CMP/DLP FOR MFRANCOM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [KFLU](#) [TBIO](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [SENV](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DRC: AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE: NO CONFIRMED CASES

REF: KINSHASA 461

¶1. (U) DRC Minister of Agriculture N'dom Nda Ombel announced March 16 that there were three suspected outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in the DRC (reftel). Ombel released a communique today stating that the first samples from those outbreaks, sent to South Africa for testing, have come back negative. He asked the population to remain calm, to be prudent, and to report any suspicious events involving domestic or wild birds. He repeated the GDRC warning not to touch any dead or obviously sick birds, and provided contact numbers for reporting die-offs.

¶2. (U) EconCouns spoke today with Agriculture Ministry Secretary General Ali Ramazani, who explained that

SIPDIS
samples taken from suspected HPAI cases in Kinshasa and Bas-Congo had tested negative. Results from samples taken from the 200-300 chicken and duck die-off in Tshikapa, Western Kasai are pending. Ramazani estimated that the Tshikapa sample results would be received within a day or two.

¶3. (U) Comment: The negative results are good news for the DRC, where rumors always run rampant. It is a hopeful sign that the GDRC, in coordination with international partners, sent the samples out quickly and that only a few days passed between the original announcement and the preliminary results. Despite its own personnel and equipment shortcomings, the GDRC is working with WHO, FAO, and UNICEF to obtain information, share it with the population, and thereby avoid panic. End comment.

MEECE